

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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FOL REPEAT STATE 55667 ACTION USMISSION SIANI INFO CAIRO 7 MAR.

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EG

SUBJECT: OFF-LOADING OF MODULES

REF: A) SINAI 0232, B) STATE 052832

1. ZACHRY CONSTRUCTION CORP HAS CONTINUOUSLY ADVISED THAT PORT SAID FACILITIES ARE SUITABLE FOR OFF-LOADING OF MODULES. MR. HOOD'S SURVEY OF PORT SAID FACILITIES IN EARLY FEBRUARY SERVED AS THE BASIS FOR REAFFIRMATION OF ZACHRY'S EARLIER ESTIMATE THAT PORT SAID WAS SUITABLE. IT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED THAT ANCILLARY OFF-LOADING EQUIPMENTS ARE INTEGRAL TO THE SHIPMENT. THESE ARE PROVIDED BY ZACHRY, ARE NOW LOADED ABOARD THE BRITISH SHIP, AND IN ZACHRY'S VIEW WILL AUGMENT PORT SAID FACILITIES SUFFICIENTLY TO ENABLE EFFECTIVE OFF-LOADING OF MODULES. HENCE, OFF-LOADING DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE A PROBLEM AT PORT SAID. OUR CONCERN HAS ALWAYS BEEN WITH THE TRANSHIPMENT ASPECTS WHICH WERE CONVEYED IN REF B.

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2. OUR REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION OF PORT TAUFUQ STEMMED

FROM CONVERSATIONS HERE WITH AMBASSADOR EILTS WHO SUGGESTED THAT THIS PORT FACILITY BE INVESTIGATED AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO AVOID CANAL CROSSING. THE SHIP CAPTAIN ADVISES THAT HE IS FAMILIAR WITH PORT TAUFIQ, AND CAN PROBABLY DISCHARGE CARGO THERE, IF DESIRED. HOWEVER, QUESTIONS STILL REMAIN AS TO WHETHER OR NOT HE CAN DOCK, WHETHER OR NOT OFF-LOADING FACILITIES AT DOCKSIDE ARE SUITABLE AT TAUFIQ AND THE ROADS THEREFROM ARE CROSSABLE. ZACHRY HAS DIRECTED ITS CAIRO REPRESENTATIVE TO INVESTIGATE THIS ASPECT. WITHOUT BENEFIT OF THIS INFO AS YET, WE DO BELIEVE AT A VERY MINIMUM, ZACHRY WILL NEED TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL CRANE WHICH IN TURN WILL DELAY DEPARTURE OF SHIP FROM CONUS AT LEAST 5-10 DAYS AND ENTAIL ADDITIONAL DELAY AT TAUFIQ TO ASSEMBLE CRANE. WE WILL PROVIDE INFO WHEN RECEIVED BUT DISCUSSIONS WITH ZACHRY THIS DATE INDICATE ONLY REMOTEST OF POSSIBILITY THAT TAUFIQ IS ACCEPTABLE.

3. WE HAVE AGAIN REVIEWED ZACHRY'S PLAN FOR CANAL CROSSING. IT ASSUMES AVAILABILITY OF BRIDGES ONLY DURING DARKNESS, LEASING OF SOME ADDITIONAL FLATBEDS (ALREADY ARRANGED) AND TURN AROUND DELIVERY OF MODULES TO BASE CAMP. WE ARE NOT PRONE TO SECOND GUESS ZACHRY AND CAUTION THAT IN ANY ASSESSMENT OF PORT FACILITIES ONE MUST BE CAREFUL TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE DIFFICULT AND THE IMPOSSIBLE. WE RECOGNIZED THE DIFFICULTIES EARLY ON; HENCE, OUR INTEREST IN ASHDOD. MODULE OFF-LOADING AT ASHDOD WOULD HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY MORE EFFECTIVE IN TERMS OF COST AND SCHEDULE. THIS IS HINDSIGHT NOW FOR THIS ALTERNATIVE IS NO LONGER VALID BASED UPON OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AMBASSADOR HERE ON FRIDAY. WE ARE, THEREFORE, PLANNING ON A PORT SAID DELIVERY.

4. IN YOUR DISCUSSIONS WITH GOE, WE REQUEST THAT YOU GAIN ASSURANCES, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, FOR DOCKING PRIORITY. ZACHRY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIRING AUGMENTING LABOR, BUT UNDOUBTEDLY THE PRESENCE OF AUTHORITATIVE GOE OFFICIALS DURING DOCKING AND OFF-LOADING WILL ENSURE INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS SEGMENT OF OPERATION. GOE ASSISTANCE, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF PRIORITIES, WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RESPECT TO CANAL CROSSING, IS A SINE QUA NON. WE ALSO INTEND TO PROVIDE A QUALIFIED USG OFFICIAL TO ASSIST ZACHRY.

5. QUALIFIED INDUSTRY CONSULTANTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE HERE ON THE WEEKEND TO PERMIT US TO THOROUGHLY EXPLORE USE OF HELICOPTERS. THE M/V GARTHNEWYDD DEPARTS CORPUS CHRISTI AT APPROXIMATELY 1900Z MARCH 8. WHILE IN TRANSIT, WE

WILL INVESTIGATE HELICOPTER ASPECT AND ADVISE. HOWEVER,
EVEN IF SUCH CAPABILITY IS AVAILABLE LOCALLY EITHER IN
EGYPT OR FROM COUNTRY/FIRM ACCEPTABLE TO EGYPT; WE ARE
OF THE OPINION THAT THE HIGH COSTS FOR HELICOPTER LIFT
ARE PROHIBITIVE IN TERMS OF SCHEDULE ADVANTAGES. KISSINGER

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